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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/611,864	07/03/2003	Alfred Annecke	111427-00599/AT02014	3851

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EXAMINER	
NGUYEN, PHUONGCHI T	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
2833	

DATE MAILED: 04/07/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/611,864	ANNECKE, ALFRED	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Phuongchi Nguyen	2833	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: "a locking element " and "a base portion" are labeled the same as the numeral reference "20" on page 6, line 28.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 9, line 1 is objected to because of the following informalities: "the catch means" lack proper antecedence basis. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter, which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 6 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 6, lines 1-2, what is the meaning of "the plug connector in which the catch arms in the function position of the plug connector and receptacle run parallel to the trunk"? For examination purposes, claim 6 will be considered as the plug connector in which the catch arms in the closed position of the plug connector and receptacle is located parallel to the trunk.

Claim 11, lines 1-4, it is unclear how "the locking elements comprises a plug arm, which is of such length that in the function position of housing and receptacle, it releases an effective shunt between the contact parts and/or contact and/or contact elements." Claim 11 cannot be examined on the merit.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

6. Claims 1-10 and 12-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Little et al (US6435894B2).

In regarding to claim 1, Little et al discloses an electrical plug connector (figures 1 and 2), in particular for use between a receptacle (igniter) and an electrical control device for a restraint system in motor vehicles, comprising a housing (12) having a housing body (of 12) and a trunk (54) projecting therefrom for receiving electrically connected contact elements (16, 18) for the purpose of contacting corresponding contact parts (32, 34) of the receptacle (26); (flexible) catch arms (50, 52) with spring effect on the trunk (54) for fixing the housing (12) in corresponding recesses (30) of the receptacle (26), the catch arms (50, 52) are joined at the end (54a) of the trunk (54) and from there pass, at a distance from the trunk (54), in the direction forward the housing body (of 12); and a locking element (14) that can he plugged onto the housing (12), the locking element (14) comprises spring-acting locking arms (140, 142) for making fast (by snapping) to the housing (12).

In regarding to claim 2, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which the locking arms (140, 142) of the locking element (14) project out from a base portion (132).

In regarding to claim 3, Little et al discloses the plug connector in which the base portion (132) is configured as a kind of frame (since Applicant's base portion 22g is a top bar side view as shown in figure 1; therefore, Little et al 's the base portion 132 is also configured as a frame).

In regarding to claim 4, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which the locking arms (140, 142) of the locking element (14), in plugged condition of the locking element,

extend into the areas (slots formed by arms 50, 52 on the opposite end of the end 54a) of the catch arms (50, 52) of the housing (12).

In regarding to claim 5, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which the locking arms (140, 142) of the locking element (14) are movable along slots (areas formed by arms 50, 52 on the opposite end of the end 54a) that are formed in the catch arms (50, 52).

In regarding to claim 6, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which the catch arms (50, 52) in the closed position of the plug connector and receptacle is located parallel to the trunk (54).

In regarding to claim 7, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector in which the catch arms (50, 52) and the locking arm (140, 142) are configured such that in the function position of plug connector (10) and receptacle (26) are made fast (by snapping) in the same recesses (30) of the receptacle (26).

In regarding to claim 8, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which catch means (64) of catch arms (50, 52) are arranged in an area of the catch arms (50, 52) which is adjacent to an area (closed to the trunk end 54a) at which the catch arms (50, 52) are joined to a trunk end (54a).

In regarding to claim 9, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which catch means (144, 146) of the locking arms (140, 142) arranged in a free end area of the locking arms (140, 142).

In regarding to claim 10, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector in which the locking element (14) in its complete plug position with respect to the housing (12) can be plugged with the housing (12) onto the receptacle (26).

In regarding to claim 12, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector in which the locking element (14) can be shifted in relation to the housing (12) in the axial direction

of the trunk (54) (after the locking element 14 is locked onto the housing 12, the locking element 14 and the housing 12 can be shifted in the axial direction of the trunk 54).

In regarding to claim 13, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector in which the locking element (14) be shifted along a path (formed by arms 50, 52 and trunk 54) that is specified by a window (142a) formed in the locking element (14).

In regarding to claim 14, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector in which the catch arms (50, 52), in the function position of housing (12) and receptacle (26), engage with their free ends in openings (142a) which are formed in the locking element (14).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phuongchi Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-2012. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00AM-4:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula Bradley can be reached on (571) 272-2800 ext 33. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

PCN March 31, 2004

P. Bradley

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